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ABSTRACT

Guidelines to aid the Extension Agent in writing articles for newspapers are presented. The manual is divided into the following sections: Why Use Newspapers?; Newspaper Public Relations; Before You Begin to Write; What Is News?; The Right Words; Feature Stories; Writing Columns; Newspaper Editorials; Editing; and Photography. In addition, a Newspaper Style Manual is provided, which furnishes guides for capitalization, abbreviations, punctuation, and numbers. (DB)

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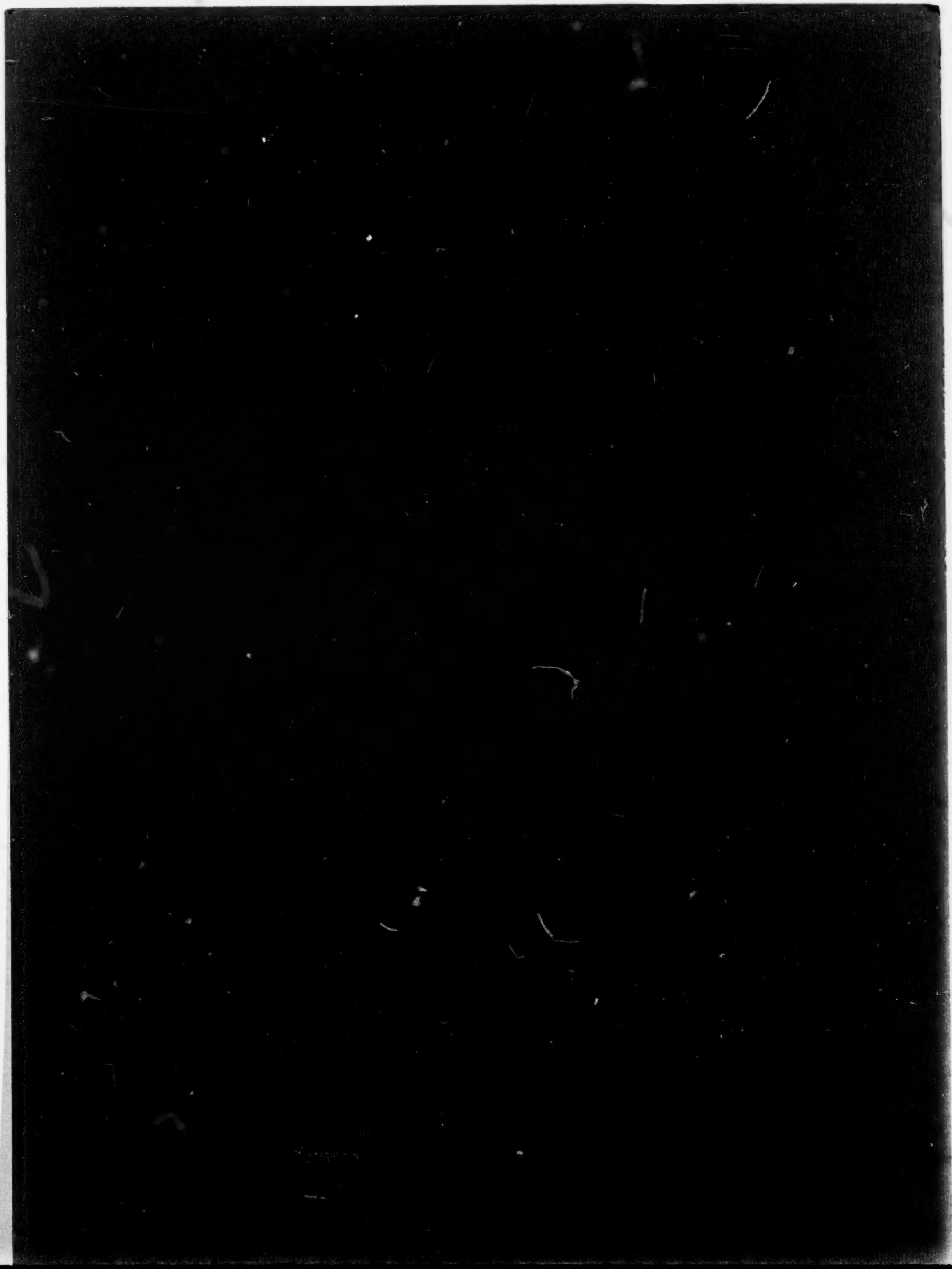

YOU AND YOUR NEWSPAPER

A GUIDANCE MANUAL

FOR COOPERATIVE EXTENSION AGENTS

NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY

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CONTENTS

	Page
WHY USE NEWSPAPERS?	1
The Adoption Process	2
Your Opportunity	3
NEWSPAPER PUBLIC RELATIONS	4
Newsmen Are People, Too	4
Talk Agriculture and Home Economics	4
Involve Newsmen In Your Program	5
Press Etiquette	5
BEFORE YOU BEGIN TO WRITE	9
The Editor's Shoes	9
Take Notes	9
Names Are Important	10
A Date Book	10
The Ingredients	11
Appearance Is Important	12
A Headline?	12
How Your Copy Should Look	13
Keep A Scrapbook	19
Time To Write	19
Ask For Help	19
WHAT IS NEWS?	20
It's A Happening	20
THE RIGHT WORDS	22
Worth Remembering	22
Source Of Information	23
Be Objective	24
Say It Once	24
Be Positive	24
Make It Active	25
Short Words	25
Liven It Up	25
Simple Words	25
Short, Simple Sentences	26
Short Paragraphs	26
Transitions	27
Lists Of Names	27
No All-Cap Words	28

	Page
THE RIGHT WORDS(continued)	
Think, Then Write	28
Getting Started	28
Arranging The Story	31
Story Length	32
Spot and Advice Articles	32
Spot News	32
The Advice Story	33
The Meeting Story	34
FEATURE STORIES	41
How They Differ	41
Subjects For Features	42
The Beginning And The Ending	44
Suggest Features To Reporters	44
WRITING COLUMNS	45
Make It Brief, Personal	45
Gathering Information	45
Judge Your Material	46
Write About People	47
Meet Deadlines	47
Read It Aloud	47
Column Headings	48
Appearance	48
NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS	49
Don't Write Them	49
Offer Suggestions	49
EDITING	50
Read It Carefully	50
Check Spelling	50
Clarity, Meaning, Simplicity	51
Copy Marks	52
PHOTOGRAPHY	53
Supplying Photographs	53
Polaroid Prints	53
Conventional Photography	54
Photo Size	55
You Need Action	56
Cutlines	56
Mailing	57
Know Your Camera	57

Page

NEWSPAPER TERMS 58

NEWSPAPER STYLE MANUAL. 69

CAPITALIZATION 70

ABBREVIATIONS. 72

PUNCTUATION 74

NUMERALS. 80

WHY USE NEWSPAPERS?

As an Extension agent dedicated to promoting change, you should be interested in doing the best job you can with the time, funds, expertise and facilities available to you.

In relation to cost, including time spent in preparation, newspaper stories are the most effective of methods you can use to encourage the adoption of Extension-approved practices.

Why? Well, much of the actual expense of using newspaper stories in Extension teaching is borne by the newspaper. Another reason for the effectiveness of news stories lies in the large number of people in your reading audience.

As an Extension teacher, you will find it very difficult to contact, personally or through meetings, all the people you need to see. Newspaper articles help make your job easier. They contact people for you.

The newspaper story expands the audience for your thinking and the thinking of others, thus aiding the educational process. It is a chief means of getting information about Extension activities and better practices to the many rural and urban people you don't contact individually; who do not attend meetings or participate in other Extension activities.

If you don't make full use of the newspapers available to you, you are curtailing the influence of your teaching effort.

The Adoption Process

Authorities generally recognize five stages in the process a person goes through to adopt a new idea or practice. These stages are awareness, interest, evaluation, trial, and adoption.

Use of mass media is the best way for you to make large numbers of individuals AWARE of a new idea or practice. Its use is also the best way to INTEREST people in an innovation.

During the third and fourth stages -- EVALUATION and TRIAL -- mass media drops to last in effectiveness. But it moves back to third place in effectiveness in the final stage -- (reinforcement of) ADOPTION.

Community leaders are likely to be the best read. They pass on information they get from you through newspapers to people who depend on them for legitimizing new ideas and practices. So, even though you may not directly reach some of your audience through newspaper articles, you will reach them through your community leaders by way of newspapers.

Your Opportunity

People buy the newspaper to keep informed on what is happening and what and where merchandise and services are available at what prices. You can help and be helped.

Agricultural and home economics news isn't dead. Big things are happening. You can and should inform the people in your county about these happenings through your newspaper.

Some New Mexico Extension agents have more opportunity than others to reach people through newspapers. If you have a newspaper in your county and aren't using

it, you aren't contacting as many people as you could.

Make time for use of mass media in your plan of work, and you will make your entire effort more successful.

NEWSPAPER PUBLIC RELATIONS

Newsmen Are People, Too

Newspaper reporters and editors are people, too. They work at their jobs as you do yours. Most of them want to do their jobs well. You will become a friend if you help them do their jobs better. Make their jobs harder, and they will have little time for you.

Be consistent. Prepare accurate, impartial news stories all the time, and you will find a warm welcome in any newspaper office.

Talk Agriculture and Home Economics

Get to know your editor or one of the newspaper reporters personally. Talk to him about agriculture or home economics. Don't bother him during busy periods, but find out when he has some slack time and talk.

Some press problems, imagined or real, may be because news people don't understand. Time spent with them will let them feel more at home with agricultural and home economics stories.

They will also be in a better position to fairly weigh stories unfavorable to agriculture.

Don't expect news articles to result from your informational talks with newsmen. You may get a story or two, but consider them a bonus.

Your real aim is to educate your newspaper contact to the importance and problems of agriculture and home economics. Most newsmen are now one generation or more away from the farm. They may not know simple things that you take for granted.

Give them a chance to learn some basics. Progress may be slow until your contact learns the common-ground knowledge it takes to understand a new area. You will need some patience.

On the other hand, you may enjoy learning a few things about the newspaper business. Newsmen like to talk about what they know best. What they tell you will help you make better use of the service they offer you as an educator and as one of their newspaper's many readers.

The knowledge you pass on to your newspaper contact can be the best offense toward a better public image.

Involve Newsmen in Your Program

Involve newspaper personnel in your programs -- if not the editor, then a staff member. Ask him to talk to Extension Clubs, 4-H Clubs, agricultural organizations. He can talk on news writing, photography, or the importance of newspapers. He will usually be happy to help if you give him time to prepare. Your effort in involving him will bring the newspaper and Extension closer together.

Press Etiquette

Members of the press should always be invited guests at any of your functions. Never ask a newsman to buy a ticket or pay admission. You don't buy tickets for admission to your office. The places where things happen in your county are the offices of the newsman. He doesn't expect, and shouldn't be asked, to pay admission.

Offer him a complimentary ticket before the subject of buying one comes up. If your event calls for photos, arrange for a reserved space near the head table for the photographer.

If there is money available for advertising events which you are involved with, don't expect free space for news stories about the event unless the paper also gets some of the advertising.

Don't heckle a newsman about why a particular story wasn't used. Just as some of your plans change, plans of newsmen to use certain stories sometimes change as the day develops.

It is all right to ask the newsman if there is something wrong with the story that you can correct, or perhaps correct the next time. But just ask once about a particular story.

Don't complain about type-setting errors in a story unless the errors are extremely serious. If you feel you must discuss the error, go to the person who handled the story for you, not to his boss. Explain your concern. You may get a correction or another story.

But remember, newspapers don't like to admit mistakes in public any more than you do. When they run a correction, they admit an error in the most public of ways -- in print. Don't insist on a correction. You may insist and get it, but you may never again get another story published.

The space in the pages of the newspaper is the same to a newsman as a can of corn is to the grocer. It represents money -- a means of livelihood.

The editor has little control over the amount of space he has available on a particular day. Space for news is determined by the amount of advertising sold for

the issue by the newspaper's advertising department.

"Publicity" is a bad word in newspaper offices. The paper isn't in business to provide a "publicity" outlet for anyone or any organization. It is in business to make money by selling advertising and newspapers. As more papers are sold, more advertising can be sold, and more money will be made.

Encourage your clubs to have active reporters who provide newspapers with what they want in the form they want it.

Don't expect newspapers to publish trivial news stories. Learn by watching your paper what your editor considers news.

If your news stories are of interest mainly to housewives and club members, expect the stories to appear on the society page -- the same as sports stories are confined to sports pages.

Know the deadline for the newspaper and also deadlines for agricultural and society pages and columns.

Don't impose by calling or going into the newspaper office five minutes before the deadline with a story that should have been there much earlier.

Don't play favorites with newsmen or media.

If a newsman, through his questioning and initiative, gets information from you which you had not planned to release, do not volunteer that information to other news media until they also ask you for it.

On a major agricultural story, make sure all your media get an equal break. Radio stations usually feel they have been treated fairly if you get news to them for

use at noon on the day an afternoon newspaper is to carry the story.

That doesn't mean that you should deliver the story to both the radio station and the newspaper at 11:30 a.m. the day it is to be published. The newspaper must have the story before then to publish it that day.

Ideally, the typed story should be delivered to the newspaper at least by the afternoon before it is to be printed, earlier for weekly papers, and to the radio station after opening of business hours on the day of publication. Your understanding with your editor on his requirements should be your guide.

Submit the same copy to both newspapers and radio stations. Radio stations may re-write and shorten the story, but they won't object to getting the longer one.

You will make a hit with radio station personnel if you call their attention to hard-to-pronounce words and names when you deliver the story.

Say thanks. If a reporter does a particularly good job on a story, write him a note and also address a copy to his boss. A pat on the back has never really hurt anyone.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN TO WRITE

The Editor's Shoes

Put yourself in the place of a newspaper editor. You, as an editor, have a specific amount of space for news articles. Your job is to fill the space with information which is as informative, entertaining, and pleasing to your readers as you can make it.

The newspaper editor looks at articles and photographs with the thought of satisfying his readers. He may have to deal with limitations in his staff and his printing operation, but within those limitations, he is working to satisfy the inquisitive nature of his readers.

You can help your newspaper editor by supplying him with stories which interest his readers. You can help yourself by preparing in advance to write.

Take Notes

Make sure you know what you are going to write about. Have the essentials written down in note form. Don't rely on your memory. There will come a time, regardless of how good a memory you have, when it will fail you. When your memory fails, you may present incorrect statements or facts in your story. If this happens with any frequency, you will get the reputation of presenting false stories to your editor.

For the most part, you won't be the one who suffers from your inaccurate information. The media takes most of the blame. It gives the critical reader

the chance to say "What a lousy newspaper. They've made another error."

If you are going to report the results of a meeting to the newspaper, take notes during the meeting. You may feel a little strange for the first couple of times because you have the feeling people are curious about what you are doing. Tell them. They will be flattered that you feel they have said something worth noting.

Names Are Important

Prepare a list of correctly-spelled names and addresses that you are likely to use frequently. It will save you time from seeking out the spellings when you begin to write.

The telephone directory is usually correct. City directories are another source for spelling. Never guess at the spelling of a person's name.

A Date Book

A date book of coming events is a good idea. Perhaps you can include this on your activity calendar. Be sure you get news releases announcing the events prepared well in advance.

A story written two weeks in advance of a routine event is about right. For bigger events such as fairs, start much earlier and plan several stories.

Don't be surprised if your story doesn't appear in print for a few days after you submit it. A story prepared well in advance of an event gives the editor some breathing room on when he must use it.

Suggest to your newspaper contact that he or she may want to personally cover major events. Call attention to what you consider major events. They will appreciate it.

If your contact is unable to attend, make arrangements to provide him with essential information.

A news story in advance of an event always calls for a follow-up story.

The Ingredients

To communicate well, good writing must be both accurate and clear. You are in the best position to know whether your writing is accurate. The reader can best judge its clarity.

Add another ingredient -- interesting to read -- or you won't get a chance to communicate. Your prospective readers will shut you out and go on to something else unless your writing is interesting.

Few of you will be successful at writing for newspapers unless you believe in what you are doing. If you consider writing as a drudgery, you will never do it well.

You must also have a purpose in each article you write. If the article you have in mind has no purpose, don't write it. You will be wasting your time, and the chances are it won't be printed anyway.

You should know the audience to whom particular articles are directed. Study the different groups of people you need to contact. Know what their interests are. Appeal to those interests when you write. If you do, your chances of being a good writer are much improved.

There is one more ingredient -- the use of words -- in being a good writer. Combine the right words with proper punctuation marks and you will have attained writing skill.

Appearance Is Important

Type your articles on white or yellow paper; size 8-1/2 x 11 inches; one side only.

Use carbon copies only as a last resort. A carbon copy may give the recipient the feeling that you think he is second rate.

Duplicate the story on your duplicating machine, or type originals for each media. Mechanically-duplicated copies seem to receive more approval than carbon copies.

Carbon copies are also hard to read at times. Newspapers don't like to guess at what a word or number is.

There will be exceptions to the no-carbon copy rule. Sometimes, when you are away from your office, you will have no choice. Fairs are a good example. Carbon copies are sometimes the fastest means of getting copies of judging results to several media. They will understand this.

Make the best carbon copies you can produce. Don't make the editor guess at what you have typed. If you must deliver a carbon copy, explain why.

A Headline?

What about a headline? Should you write one?

Let your conscience be your guide. Some editors like to know at a glance what the story is about. Other editors may be offended if they think you are trying to write a headline for their newspaper. Headline writing is one of the reasons editors get paychecks.

If you do write a headline for your story, don't expect it to appear in the newspaper. Headlines are fitted over your story by a unit count system. They vary in length and size, depending on the number of column widths devoted to your story, and the size and family of type used in the headline.

There is only the faintest of chances that your headline will fit the conditions needed so that it can go over the story in the newspaper.

How Your Copy Should Look

Your newspaper-ready copy should resemble the sample which appears on the following two pages:

San Juan County Extension Office
Orion Utton, NMSU County Agent
Courthouse
Aztec, N.M.
Telephone: 422-2222
July 4, 1971

Clean Copy Wins
Editors' Approval

News or information prepared for newspaper publication is called copy. When you or your secretary prepare copy for the newspaper, it should look like this.

Always double space. Leave a margin of one and one-half inches wide, both sides, and begin the body of your story one-third of the way down the page from the top of page one. Do not include a release date if at all possible.

You can suggest a headline to tell the editor what the story is about, but he will probably write his own.

Place no more than one story on each page.

Keep paragraphs short and don't continue a paragraph or a sentence from one page to another. Never hyphenate words at the end of a typed line.

(MORE)

Page 2 -- COPY

Give each news media clear copy.

Use either white or yellow-colored paper. Don't ever use flimsy paper.

Many of your news stories will fit on one page. Never single space sentences at the bottom of page one to prevent preparation of page two. If you need more space, indicate that there is another page by typing (MORE) at the bottom of the completed page. Number additional pages in the upper left corner and indicate the subject of the article by descriptive wording such as: Page 2 -- COPY.

-- 30 --

Keep a Scrapbook

Keep a scrapbook of your newspaper clippings. You will find the stories to be a good reference source. The scrapbook will also be a source of pride to you, and it can also support your statements to supervisors and others about program efforts.

Time to Write

Set aside a time during the week to write both your column and news stories. With time allotted, you are less likely to overlook a good story. You are also less likely to put off writing the story until it is too late.

Ask for Help

If, after you have made a serious effort, you simply can't put your news story together, outline the facts and present them to your newspaper contact. Tell him your problem and ask him to write the story for you. Study what he does with your facts. You will be better prepared when the next story opportunity comes around.

WHAT IS NEWS?

It's a Happening

News is a happening -- what has happened, what is happening, what is going to happen.

Straight news is perishable. It must appear in the newspaper before an event takes place or immediately afterward to have news value.

Write about what people are doing; what they intend to do; what they are saying; why they are doing and saying what they are.

Here are some possibilities:

Talks; before and after meeting stories; special events; tours; timely advice; experiences; research results, NMSU Agricultural Services Department test plots, their location and progress; individual honors and successes; unusual happenings; new information on specific crops of importance or potential importance to your county; contests and winners; predictions; NMSU Agricultural Information Department news releases adapted to your area; newsletter items; fairs.

The list can go on and on. Reports to the state office are a good source of news stories. What are you reporting to your supervisors that the people you serve need or would like to know, and don't?

Extension news can be informing people, urban and rural, about what Extension is. Adult urban audiences generally are not familiar with the New Mexico State University Cooperative Extension Service.

THE RIGHT WORDS

Worth Remembering

The concise, well written, short news article which deals in facts is many steps ahead of a longer, poorly-written story from a writer who is careless with his information.

Your reader is more likely to complete a short article, and the good editor knows it. Therefore, the likelihood of having important material edited from a short article is much less than from a longer one. A brief story will more likely present information in an understandable manner because you have taken the time to sort the important from the unimportant.

One of the basics of a good news article is SIMPLICITY. The intricate findings of research may be fine for a publication which will be read by other researchers or by people who are intimately interested in the subject. But in news articles written for a general audience, raw research material must be presented very simply so that most people can understand.

Information which you consider of utmost importance because it is a part of your life's work may be of little interest to the general public unless it is presented simply and in an interesting fashion.

People like to read about people. The best way to add human interest to your writing is to use the "you" approach. But you can overdo it.

People are interested first in themselves and the effects the subject of your news story has on them. Secondly, they are interested in the effects on their friends and neighbors. If your story doesn't appeal to the self interest of several readers of the newspaper, it probably won't be printed.

Source of Information

Most news stories you write will need to list a source of the information. This builds reader confidence in what you write.

Without a source, a stated authority (and this can be you in many instances), the reader is left to guess at who provided the information. He may assume that the newspaper is the authority.

The newspaper doesn't like to assume responsibility for what you say, even though it does, legally, if it prints the story. The paper likes to have an authority written into the story to at least share responsibility for what you say.

Place the name, address, and title of the person making the statements in the first, second, or third paragraphs of the story in most cases.

Don't repeat the address and title when you refer to the person a second time.

Repeat the last name of the authority at scattered points throughout your story. This leaves no doubt in the reader's mind about who is making the statements.

EXAMPLE:

"The 1971 cotton crop promises to be an improvement over the 1970 crop," says J. W. Gilstrap, Lea County Extension agent.

Gilstrap warned, however, that the situation could change before the crop is harvested.

The exception to using the name of the authority in the news article, obviously, is the personal column. Since your name appears at the top of a personal column, you should not repeat it in the column itself.

When you are writing a straight news story, any statement which is an expression of opinion must include the name of the person making the statement.

Any opinions you include in a straight news article or feature story must be expressions of someone logically connected with the story.

Expressions of opinion are generally found on the paper's editorial page and in personal columns.

Be Objective

Be objective in a straight news story. Stick to facts. You abandon your objectivity and become an editorial writer when you write that refreshments were either delicious or tasteless. You set yourself up as a judge when you describe a speaker as a handsome, cute, or stupid man.

Don't editorialize in a news story.

Say It Once

Don't repeat. Your reader can re-read a sentence if he is in doubt. Repetition takes up valuable newspaper space.

Hedge as little as possible. There will be times when you must, but make as many definite statements as possible.

Be Positive

Make positive statements. Don't write in a negative manner. Be positive, active, brief, simple and personal.

Make It Active

Write in the active voice if you want to hold your reader. "John Doe, Animas, won the prize for growing the largest squash," has more appeal than "The prize for the largest squash was won by John Doe, Animas."

Short Words

Short words are better than long ones. The reader doesn't have to work to understand short words. If you must use a long, unfamiliar word, explain it. Say that laryngotracheitis is a chicken's sore throat.

Liven It Up

Liven up your writing by using personal words -- second and third person pronouns such as you and he; masculine and feminine gender such as he, she, daughter, actor, sister (words indicating the sex of the person referred to). Use names: as John, Chaves, Mrs. Smith.

Newspapers generally don't use first-person pronouns such as "I" or "we."

Simple Words

The right words are those which most of your audience will understand as you do. Those words are put together in sentences which are simple and not a chore to read. Two or three sentences about an idea combine to form short paragraphs. You can have a one-sentence paragraph.

New or little-used words need to be defined when you use them. The meaning of words that you understand well may be unclear to a majority of your readers.

Don't use jargon which is completely familiar to you as a county agent, but unknown to your average reader.

Make sure the words you use don't convey a double meaning -- one meaning which you intend and another which may be damaging.

Short, Simple Sentences

Keep your sentences as simple as possible.

Sentences should be written for the eighth or ninth grade level. People are comfortable reading at a level about three grades below the grade they completed in school.

Express only one thought per sentence when at all possible. There will be times when this can't be done, but those times will be few. Make a practice of keeping your sentences between 15 and 25 words long. Shorten some to two, three, five or 10 words. Others may be lengthened slightly, but don't overdo it.

Make sure each of your sentences contains a complete thought.

Short Paragraphs

News editors perfer short paragraphs. A paragraph in a newspaper often consists of only one sentence.

Short paragraphs give the reader places to rest. "Lots of white space" is a common expression in today's newsroom. Some of the white space results from numerous, short paragraphs.

Paragraphs, even more so than punctuation marks, give your reader rest periods. They are important in making reading pleasant, not a chore. Long paragraphs in newspaper stories appear to go on forever. Remember that most newspaper columns are only two inches or less in width. Long paragraphs give your reader little rest.

Use paragraphs each time you introduce a new thought. Use paragraphs when you enumerate, regardless of whether you use enumerating symbols.

Transitions

Transitional words and phrases tie your story together. They prepare your reader for what is going to happen in your article. Or, they help him finish one point in your story and go on to another. They can also indicate that the story is continuing on the same subject.

Transitional words and phrases help your story flow smoothly. They are the polish of a good writer.

Your readers can be warned of a change in story direction like this:

"On the other hand..."

"On the opposite side..."

"On the subject of..."

"However,..."

"Even though beef prices are up..."

Examples of transitions which let your readers know you are continuing with the same thought are:

"On this same subject, Wright emphasized..."

"Along this same line, producers will find..."

"In addition..."

"Also,..."

Lists of Names

When you use names, use the first name, initial and last name when possible: Philip J. Leyendecker; or, P. J. Leyendecker, if he prefers it that way. Always add the complete address after the name when the names first appear in the story: 283 West Main St., Artesia; or Windswept Farm, Barnwell Road.

Your newspaper may cut part of the complete address, but let them do it, not you. When a complete address is not available, use as much of the address as you have.

When you use a list of names and addresses, don't place each name and address on a separate line. Do not list them one under the other. Rather, "run them in," one after the other. Group all names and addresses from one city or locality together.

EXAMPLE:

4-H leaders are Mrs. George Washington Jr., 123 Main St.; Mrs. Duncan B. Bull, 101 Park Dr.; Mrs. Paul Sheraton, Prosperity Farm; and Mrs. Paul Jones, Mrs. Jack Smith and Mrs. Joe Jordan, all of Elida.

To avoid any uncertainty about the time of a past event, say it was held Monday (June 12).

No All-Cap Words

Do not use all capital letters to form words you want to emphasize in your sentences.

Such as: AVOID THE USE OF capital letters. Newspaper style generally prohibits it. Don't underline words for emphasis. Newspapers won't use them.

Think, Then Write

When you find yourself having trouble putting your story into words, stop trying to write and start thinking. Once you really know what you want to say, you won't have as much trouble finding the words to say it.

Getting Started

It may help to write a title for your article before you begin. That may not be as simple as it sounds. Before you can write a title describing your article, you

must decide in your mind what you are going to write about.

Once you have decided on your subject, it can help if you begin writing down what you know, in any form. Write your thoughts in short sentences and short paragraphs. This will make it easier for you to logically organize your story later.

The best guides in sorting information for news stories are the familiar five W's and the H -- the Who, What, When, Where, Why and How questions.

If you just can't seem to get started, take out a pencil and paper and start answering questions:

WHAT AM I GOING TO WRITE ABOUT? -- Your answer to this questions should narrow your thinking on other questions which you may need to answer also. Often times, your answer here will involve WHO.

Are you going to write about:

What was said at a meeting?; what action was taken at a meeting?; what George Allen did to increase his farm profits?; what New Mexico State University's position is on changing cotton varieties?; what the Valley Extension Club plans for Recreation Day?; what insecticide is recommended for use on alfalfa?; what grain sorghum variety produces the largest yield for your farmers?

WHO AM I WRITING ABOUT? -- The answer here can be an individual, a farm organization, a USDA branch, a women's group, a recognized authority, including yourself, New Mexico State University Cooperative Extension Service specialists or administrators.

WHEN DOES OR DID THE HAPPENING TAKE PLACE? -- This question is the basis for the time element in your story. In straight news stories, time is important.

You will obviously write down the specific time and date for meetings.

You must decide about the importance of different times in your story. A deadline for buying tickets for an event may rank higher in importance than the date for the event. The year a farmer began a management practice or switched varieties is important. People want to know, as precisely as possible, when what you are writing about will or did happen.

WHERE WILL IT OR DID IT HAPPEN? -- The name and specific location of a meeting place is important. The location of a farm adds to interest in a story. Don't assume that everyone knows where the "Old Mahone Farm" is.

Where a variety test took place is important. Where 4-H'ers will spend their weekend is also important.

Sometimes papers eliminate some of the location specifics to save space, or if they feel the location is familiar to a majority of their readers. Let the newspaper decide. Put the exact location in your story until experience dictates otherwise. The editor will remove it if he desires.

WHY HAVE A MEETING? WHY DID IT HAPPEN? WHY WAS THE AWARD MADE? WHY CHANGE VARIETIES? Examples of why questions can fill many pages.

Answers to this question and another on HOW will mark you as above average in the eyes of newspaper people. Too often, answers to these questions go untold in news stories.

Answers to the WHY question may be obvious to you, but a great many people probably don't know.

Don't assume that your readers are aware of the why of the happening. Include it. It is sometimes the best material in your story.

HOW DID IT HAPPEN? HOW WAS THE PLANTER ALTERED? Sometimes the answers to this question aren't available and may not apply. You'll have to be the judge. Ask yourself the question. If you can answer it, include your answer in the story. Your story is improved if you can answer the HOW question.

Arranging the Story

Once you have written down all you know about the subject of your article, review it and decide what you think is the most important. As a matter of fact, you may want to read through all the paragraphs you have written, assigning numbers to them in the order of their importance.

The most important part of your newspaper article is the first paragraph. Decide what is the most important or most unusual thing you have to say. It goes in your first paragraph.

The first paragraph is your best tool for selling your story. You do have to sell it -- first to the editor and second to the reader.

Your second-most important item likely will be your second paragraph. The same thing may be true of your third and perhaps fourth-most important paragraphs.

By this time you will probably begin to realize that the information you have left relates in some fashion to your early paragraphs. Look at your remaining paragraphs. Select one or more that relate to your first and second paragraphs. Use them now in your story.

You will note that as you construct your story, the facts in it become less important. This form of writing construction is called the INVERTED PYRAMID form

of news article writing. It is used in writing almost all news stories in your newspaper except the feature story and personal column. There is a good reason.

If your story is too long for the newspaper to use, the editor can cut sentences and paragraphs from the bottom of the story without eliminating the important information you want your readers to know. A well-written story is basically unharmed by editing from the end.

Story Length

Two pages of double-spaced typewritten copy, beginning one-third down on the page from the top and with one and one-half inch margins on both sides, will fill about 10 inches of newspaper column. That is usually enough for one story. Important stories can be longer. Les important stories should be shorter.

Spot and Advice Articles

There are two types of straight news articles -- the SPOT NEWS article and the ADVICE article.

Spot News

The spot news article is used to tell an immediate story. It is not concerned with something your readers already know. It contains news information and should be provided to newspapers as soon as you can get it prepared.

The purpose of a spot news article is to inform interested people of a happening.

The INVERTED PYRAMID style is used in the following paragraphs to build a story. Remember, this simply means that you include the most important parts of your story in the first part of your article, following with information of less importance.

EXAMPLE:

Consider the discovery of a herbicide at New Mexico State University which provides a means of complete control of johnsongrass.

"Researchers at New Mexico State University have discovered herbicides that provide complete control over johnsongrass. The discovery was revealed today with publication of an NMSU bulletin entitled 'Johnsongrass Control On Ditchbanks.'"

This might well be the first paragraph of your spot news article on the johnsongrass control story. It contains many of the elements necessary for a good story.

Your second paragraph might read:

"Professor J. Wayne Whitworth, author of the publication, says results of the NMSU research can mean an end to johnsongrass as a competitor to more desirable growths."

And your third paragraph:

"Announcement of the discovery ends five years of extensive effort by NMSU researchers on johnsongrass control."

In these first three paragraphs, you have answered the requirement of the five W's and the H -- the Who, When, Where, Why, What and How. From this point, you can expand your story to list the herbicides used, the results experienced in tests, method of application and other information revealed in the research.

The Advice Story

The mechanics of writing an advice story differ little from preparation of a spot news story.

The advice story can be used at any time when a particular problem exists. Or a series of advice stories can be written to correct a problem.

At any time, when a better method for life activities exists, advice stories may be written to convey the message of the better way.

It is sometimes difficult to develop a lead paragraph for an advice story which will encourage the reader to do more than move on to another story. However, it is absolutely necessary to write the first paragraph well enough to encourage your reader to read farther.

The advice story provides either a partial or full answer to a particular problem. It always tells from whom the advice comes. It is a what to do, and how to do it story. Or, it at least will suggest where your reader can obtain detailed information on how to solve the problem.

The Meeting Story

The best way to encourage a person to attend a meeting is to appeal to his self interest. The person usually must feel that something in the meeting will help him, or at least will interest him.

Look over the information you have about a meeting and determine in your mind what will be of the most interest to the most people you are trying to reach.

You must decide what is the most appealing thing about the meeting you are going to write about. Make as impartial a judgment as you can.

Prepare and place meeting stories in the hands of your editor far enough in advance of the date so he will have ample time to print the story before the meeting.

You should also prepare your story far enough in advance so that farmers and others in your audience will have time to arrange their business and attend.

Your deadline for placing meeting stories in the hands of newspapers will vary, depending on whether you work with a daily or a weekly paper. Even the typesetting capacity of the paper must be considered. Ask your editor how far in advance he would like to have a meeting story.

Follow up your meeting early the next day with a story about what happened. How many people attended, and action taken, is important in a follow-up story.

Include basic information about where the meeting was held, who presided, and what the meeting was about. This is of particular benefit to people who did not read the first story, but may well be interested.

It is important that you report happenings at a meeting as quickly as you can. Editors don't like old meeting stories.

The following information is basic fact about a meeting which might have occurred. Take a pencil and paper and write a meeting story from the information. After you have completed your story, compare it to the story which follows the listing of the basic information.

A meeting has been called for 7 p.m. January 21, 1972, in the Las Cruces High School Science Building to discuss a new cotton variety.

Don Chappell, Dona Ana County Extension agent, is calling the meeting and will preside.

The meeting is being held to inform farmers of a new cotton variety -- Acala 1517-BR2. The county agent hopes that all farmers who plant cotton, and those who may plant it in the future, will attend. He also hopes that others with an interest in agriculture will attend.

The new cotton variety, Acala 1517-BR2, has a staple length of one and one-eighth to one and five-eighths inches. It is moderately tolerant to verticillium wilt, cotton boll weevils, and races one and two of bacterial blight. Yield averages two and one-half bales to the acre. The cotton can be picked by machine. Fiber strength is high.

The variety brings a premium price and can mean as much as $100 more per acre in profits over the present variety being planted.

Planting instructions will be given during the meeting.

The 10-acre experimental field of the variety was planted in Dona Ana County in 1971. Results were highly pleasing. The experimental plot was on a farm of Joe Alvarez, one of the county's respected and most prosperous farmers.

The variety was developed by Glen S. Staten, cotton breeder at New Mexico State University.

Some seed is available for planting in Dona Ana County. Information on how to obtain the seed will be available at the meeting.

Dona Ana County Extension Office
Don Chappell, NMSU County Agent
Courthouse
Las Cruces, New Mexico
Telephone: 523-5618
Jan. 10, 1972

Profit-Making Cotton Variety
To Be Discussed During Meet

A new cotton variety which has the potential to increase cotton farm income as much as $100 an acre will be discussed during a forthcoming meeting in Las Cruces.

The new variety has been successfully grown on a 10-acre Dona Ana County experimental plot by Joe Alvarez.

A limited amount of seed of the new variety, Acala 1517-BR2, will be available for planting this year. Information on how to obtain the seed, and planting instructions, will be given at the meeting.

Don Chappell, Dona Ana County Extension agent, says the meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. Jan. 21 in the Las Cruces High School Science Building. The county agent will preside.

(MORE)

Chappell urges farmers and other persons involved in agriculture to attend the meeting.

The new cotton variety brings a premium price and yield can reach two and one-half bales per acre, Chappell says.

The variety has a staple length of one and one-eighth to one and five-eighths inches. Fiber strength is high. It is moderately tolerant to verticillium wilt, races one and two of bacterial blight, and cotton boll weevils.

Acala 1517-BR2 can be successfully picked by machine.

The variety has been developed by Glen S. Staten, cotton breeder at New Mexico State University.

-30-

FEATURE STORIES

How They Differ

Feature articles are written with an informal tone. Features often include background information on why something happened or will happen.

Ask yourself: What arrangement of the information I have will be most interesting to my readers? Write it this way and you and your newspaper will have an acceptable feature story.

If your idea of a feature is of interest to you, it likely is of interest to others, too. If, you tell it well.

A feature reports not only the facts, but the why and the how of them.

Feature stories are usually longer than straight news stories -- three, four or in exceptional cases five and six double-spaced typewritten pages.

You do not need to follow the inverted pyramid style of writing in a feature story.

You may want to begin your feature with a striking statement of fact. Another way is to ask a question with an implied answer. A third method is to appeal directly to your readers with a statement you know touches their interest in themselves or the human race in general.

Subjects for Features

Feature stories usually deal with people or animals. They can also deal with a geographical area. There is usually a touch of the unusual, the unknown, or the recognized. A feature story can be a success story; it can also be about overcoming big obstacles to be successful.

Look for people -- adults or youngsters -- who are intensely interested in one area, subject, hobby or the like. Look for people who devote above-average time to a project, to helping others, or to being successful farmers, ranchers, homemakers, club leaders and club members.

The answers to what makes a man or woman spend 20 hours a week working with 4-H members are interesting. Most of us are just a little bit envious of people who find the time to do volunteer work. We want to know how they find the time; what prompts them to work without monetary reward?

Overcoming problems which arise in carrying out projects, construction of exhibits, raising a new crop, or an explanation of some interesting phase of a fair, make good reading.

Don't make the circumstances too unpleasant. Your readers lose themselves in your story characters. People don't like to feel themselves in unpleasant situations, even imaginary.

Just start asking questions of interesting people. Many people enjoy talking about themselves. If they have some secrets and you touch on them in your questioning, they will let you know in a hurry. Change the subject.

Outstanding dairymen, vegetable growers, beef producers, grain growers, are all possibilities for features. So are families whose children are all 4-H club

members. Why? What effect does 4-H have on family life? How did the interest originate? The questions bring interesting answers.

A general review of agriculture in your county deserves a feature story. What importance does agriculture play in the county? Is there room for more agricultural development? What part does the weather play? How about average costs of production? What are the problems and costs in drilling a water well? What are the prospects for young people in agriculture in your county? What does agriculture mean to the car dealer, the clothing merchant, the grocery store?

Features put more stress on basic appeals, such as health, profits, an increase in knowledge, greater happiness, more attractiveness, less effort or time.

Enthusiasm and interest may be the same thing in some cases, but not in others. Look for expressed enthusiasm. An important trait to look for in seeking an individual as a subject for a feature story is the ability to talk. A talkative person will virtually write your feature story for you.

The time element in a feature is not as critical as in a straight news story. Features usually can be used at least sometime during a season. Some features lend themselves to use one or more years after they are written.

Good feature stories can entertain and teach, amuse and educate.

There are several types of good feature stories -- historical, scientific, how-to-do-it, personality sketches, success stories.

Historical comparisons make good features -- compare weather records, crop production, food processing methods, agricultural development in the county.

Use an outstanding personality to weave in how he achieved a better life through adoption of Extension-recommended practices.

As in a straight news story, you need to determine who you are writing your feature for, and for what purpose.

The Beginning and the Ending

The importance of your first paragraph in a feature is just as important as it is in straight news stories.

You must get your readers interested enough in what is to come so they will continue with your article. The first sentences will create or lose that interest.

A good ending, dramatic, a surprise, posing a question, or some other method, helps the reader feel that he has read something besides just another straight news story. Save some interesting quote, an interesting happening, a prediction, or an unusual climax, for the ending.

Try to have your ending in mind when you begin a feature. You can't always do this, but you will feel safer and your feature will be better if you write toward an already-established ending.

Suggest Features to Reporters

Newspaper reporters are on the lookout for interesting stories. If you don't have the time to prepare a feature yourself, and you see some good possibilities, suggest them to your newspaper contact. Perhaps he has the time to gather the necessary information.

If you can manage, go with your reporter and help guide him when he needs it. Note the kind of questions he asks. Then look at the finished product. It will help you in the future.

WRITING COLUMNS

Make It Brief, Personal

Don't lift your elbows off the fence when you write a personal column for your newspaper. Write it just the way you would spend three or four minutes telling your neighbor what happened last week.

In three or four minutes, you won't have the chance to tell your neighbor all the many details. Your talk won't dwell on anything for any length of time. You will hit the high spots.

Like a short talk over the back fence, your column won't be able to describe every detail. The column will whet your readers' appetites so they will ask you for more information.

Each of your columns should include several topics. If you write about only one or two topics in each column, you will lose many readers. Then, when you do eventually write something of interest to them, they will be out of the habit of reading your column and will miss it entirely.

Write no more than two pages of typed, double-spaced copy for each column.

Gathering Information

You can gather more information during a week than you can possibly use in your column.

Make yourself an idea file. Make notes about the good ideas people are putting to use; good jobs they are doing; honors they receive; comments they make; meetings they attend. Make yourself notes on upcoming meetings; research results; ideas which are increasing income or making life more pleasant.

Don't rely on your memory. Jot down what is said, either at the time or as soon as you can after you hear it. Unless you plan to quote a person, just write down enough words to jog your memory on what you will want to say.

If you plan to quote, take down exactly what is said -- not just the essence of it.

Your own reading is a good source of column material. Clip out items you feel will interest others. When you write your column, word it as if you are telling someone what you have read.

Your opinion of what people are doing and writing in the agricultural field can be expressed in your column. Opinion is not tolerated in news stories, but most editors permit it in personal columns.

It doesn't hurt to ask county staff members for tips on column material.

Judge Your Material

Judge the material for your column before you write it. Do you have a purpose in putting the item in your column? If not, don't do it.

If leaving out a poor column item means a little shorter column for the week, that's better than boring your readers. Besides, columns should vary in length to some degree. Most editors, however, prefer that you furnish about the same length of column each week so they will know about how much space to allot.

Write About People

The most interesting writing to people is about people. There is nothing more important to a reader than himself. After that, his interest widens to include his circle of friends. Combine the two, people and self interest, and you can't go wrong in selecting column topics.

If you see something funny or unusual, write about it. But don't run the risk of offending some to create humor for others.

Write about George, Virginia, Ricardo, Tom. Don't write about the farmer, the farmer's wife, the seed salesman or the ginner. Keep it personal. Write about George's hogs, not the producer's hogs.

Use personal references such as you, I, yours, his, ours, my, we.

Meet Deadlines

You must write your column regularly and get it to your newspaper at an agreed-upon time. The newspaper won't tolerate late columns for long.

Your editor will usually insist that you write regularly, usually weekly, if you are going to label your effort a column.

Columns, including those by the newspaper staff, are almost always set in type one, two or more days in advance of the day they are published. This is done to permit economical operation of the paper's mechanical department.

Read It Aloud

Reading your column aloud helps find words that don't sound like you. If you can't pronounce them, chances are you don't use the words very often. Find a more familiar substitute if you can.

Column Headings

Discuss a column heading with your editor. He may want to create one himself. He may, however, want you to furnish one, in one or more column widths. If so, ask him about the use of your picture. Some papers have a rule against it. Otherwise, it's a good idea.

Ask help in developing column headings from the NMSU Department of Agricultural Information. The Department's artist can add a creative touch to your ideas on a column name.

Appearance

Make sure your column name and your name are at the top of the first page. The column name, along with the page number, should go at the top of succeeding pages.

(MORE) should go at the bottom of pages which don't end your column. Place -- 30 -- at the end of your column.

Divide topics in your column in some manner, such as three dashes ---, centered in the page; capitalizing the first two or three words in the first sentence of the new topic, NOW IS the time..; asterisks *** centered on the page; or in some other fashion. Your editor may have some ideas or a style the newspaper follows.

NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS

Don't Write Them

Newspaper editorials provide another opportunity to get information in print. But don't write an editorial for an editor.

Write down your facts and talk to your newspaper contact about the possibility of an editorial.

Editors usually write their own editorials. The opin'ons expressed are those of the editor, publisher and ownership.

Offer Suggestions

There is nothing wrong, however, with suggesting the subject for an editorial and with furnishing facts upon which to base comment. Just make sure your facts are correct. Otherwise, they will come back to haunt you.

Many papers publish editorials on controversial as well as non-controversial topics. Let someone else suggest the controversial subjects.

Newspapers will usually welcome information from you, though, on observance of National 4-H Week, National Garden Month, recognition of an outstanding farmer, homemaker or farm organization, and a long list of other subjects which will help you place agriculture in a favorable light.

Do your best to supply answers to the WHY questions in providing facts for editorial comment.

EDITING

Read It Carefully

After you have written the article, look for flaws. You may find it easier to read your story several times, looking for a different type of error at each reading.

In submitting an article to your newspaper, you have the responsibility of making sure your facts are correct. You must present your facts carefully and correctly. Otherwise you may mislead your readers.

Make sure you have used proper, but not difficult, language. You are an expert. As such, you are respected for your professional opinion until you leave room for doubt. Printed words in newspapers are permanent. Make sure you use them correctly.

Never abbreviate when there may be a question about what you mean. Use initials (NMSU) only after the full name (New Mexico State University) has already appeared in your story.

Edit carefully.

Check Spelling

Check spelling and doubtful word meanings in your dictionary. Sometimes, the dictionary will help with capitalization. The style of your newspaper should apply in all cases. It often differs from the dictionary.

Make sure names are spelled correctly.

Check for grammar and punctuation.

Clarity, Meaning, Simplicity

Check for clarity, meaning and simplicity. Keep in mind that you are writing to an average reader, not another county agent.

Check the arrangement of your story. Do the parts follow in logical order? If not, cut the paragraphs apart and fit them together again. A glue pot is a big help.

Logical arrangement helps your reader understand.

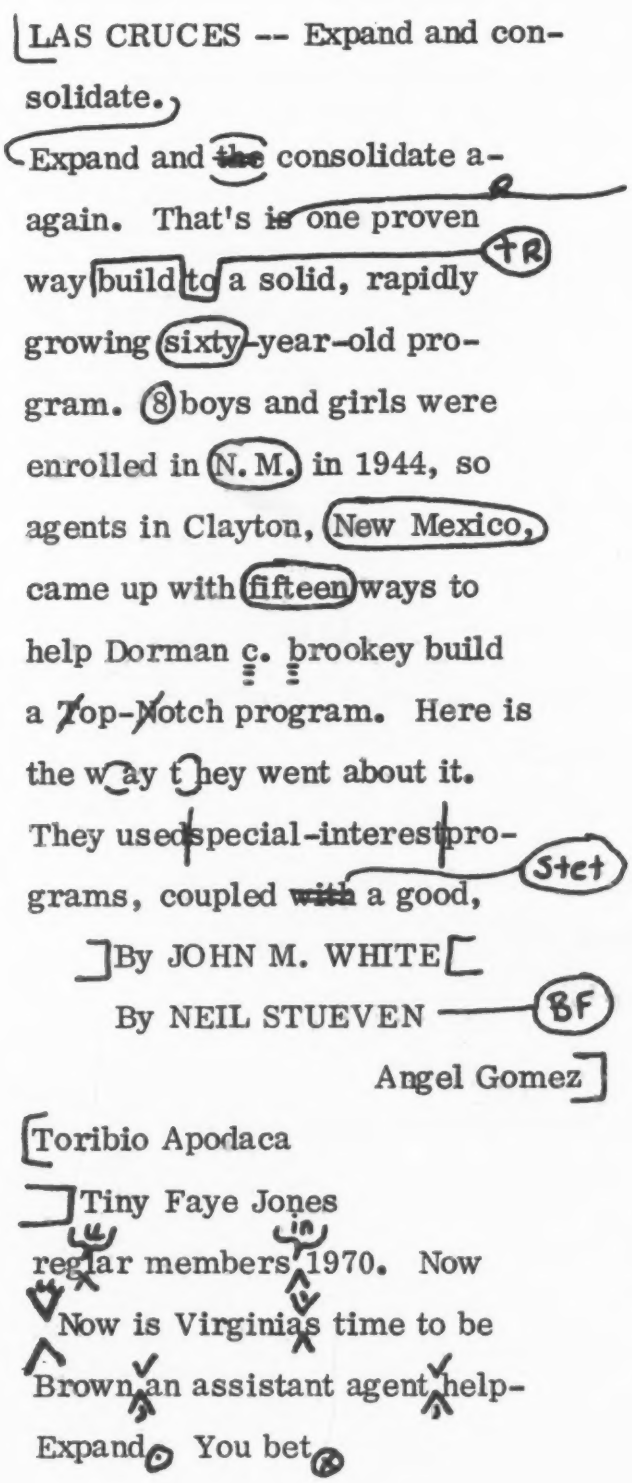
Try to keep your tenses the same. You may find this difficult in the beginning, but looking for this error in your writing and making the necessary corrections as you edit will help you use the correct tenses in the future.

As you edit, substitute short words for the long ones when possible. Long words with several syllables sound a warning of prefixes and suffixes -- strikes against easy and comfortable reading.

You may avoid embarrassment by carefully re-reading your typed article before it leaves your office.

COPY MARKS

These marks are commonly used by copy editors in editing your articles. Your articles should be free of these marks when you submit them to the newspaper. However, you may find the marks helpful in correcting your rough drafts.


LAS CRUCES -- Expand and con-
solidate.
Expand and the consolidate a-
again. That's is one proven
way build to a solid, rapidly
TR
growing sixty-year-old pro-
gram. 8 boys and girls were
enrolled in N.M. in 1944, so
agents in Clayton, New Mexico,
came up with fifteen ways to
help Dorman c. brookey build
a Top-Notch program. Here is
the way they went about it.
They used special-interest pro-
Stet
grams, coupled with a good,
By JOHN M. WHITE
By NEIL STUEVEN
BF
Angel Gomez
Toribio Apodaca
Tiny Faye Jones
reglar members 1970. Now
Now is Virginias time to be
Brown an assistant agent help-
Expand. You bet.

paragraph

no paragraph

delete

another way to delete

transpose

use figures

spell out

spell out

abbreviate

use figures

capitalize

lower case

join together

separate words

retain after striking out

center

bold face type

flush right

flush left

indent

add words or letters

insert quotes, apostrophe

insert commas

insert periods

PHOTOGRAPHY

Newspapers are selective about photos, especially those offered from outside sources. The photo should preferably contain an unusual feature -- something which will interest a large number of people.

Don't tell your editor how large to print a picture in his paper. He will decide that.

Supplying Photographs

Photographs help tell your story. Your chances of getting a photo published with your article are better if you supply the picture. However, a newspaper photographer will sometimes take the picture for you if he has the time and your proposed photo has merit. Ask and see. If a newspaper photographer shows up, remember that he is a guest at any dinners or luncheons involved.

Many times you won't be able to arrange for a newspaper photographer. You or another Extension staff member can take the photo, arranging with the newspaper to have the negatives developed and a print made to accompany your story.

Don't be afraid of using an entire roll of black and white film to get one photo placed in the newspaper. It will be well worth it, and usually the negatives can be returned to you for possible additional uses.

Polaroid Prints

A number of newspapers can use Polaroid prints, and more papers are accepting them each year. The major key to using the Polaroid print is the type of

printing process your newspaper uses.

With exceptions, newspapers printing with the "offset" reproduction method will accept Polaroid photos because they can use them easily. Newspapers printing with the "letterpress" reproduction method may have to turn the Polaroid print down because of the difficulty they have in using it.

It is important that you know whether your paper is "offset" or "letterpress."

Some editors don't care for the Polaroid photo because of the poor quality of some of the prints -- the lack of distinction between darks and whites. With the right Polaroid camera and film, however, it is possible to produce a quality photo acceptable to many "offset" and a few "letterpress" newspaper editors.

If your paper will accept Polaroid photos, this may be the route to consider in buying a camera. The speed in producing a Polaroid print is a big advantage.

In using a Polaroid camera, make sure you fill your picture with the subjects of your photographic effort. In other words, get close to take your picture.

Don't stand 25 feet away and expect to get a satisfactory photo. If you do, you will get too much area on either side, top and bottom, that is unimportant.

Conventional Photography

Both "offset" and "letterpress" newspapers can make use of the conventional photograph. However, unless you have access to a darkroom, there are limitations to what you can do with conventional film in producing photos for newspapers.

It does take time to get film processed and prints made by commercial establishments. Sometimes this time lag will prevent use of the photos by the newspaper.

One way to speed the process is to have your film processed commercially and make arrangements with your newspaper to have them produce a photo from the negative. In this manner the newspaper can produce the exact size of photo it needs. But check with your newspaper before you count on this.

You may be required to have the film developed and small prints made commercially before you choose photos to accompany your story. Then, you will need to order the size of prints your newspaper needs. This takes time and requires that you plan ahead for stories with which you hope to furnish photos.

Photo Size

Many papers have a definite size of picture they want for producing one, two, three or four column-wide photos. The "offset" newspaper may not be as strict on size as the "letterpress" paper.

If, however, you are having a photo made commercially which you hope to use in a newspaper, you need to know how wide the picture should be to fit your newspaper's columns. Then, have the photo printed that size.

Mark the portions of the photo you want reproduced on your small photo before returning it and the negative to a commercial photo processor. The processor can print only your cropped photo on the large, glossy print for the newspaper.

Don't send colored or rough-surfaced photos to newspapers.

If you must guess at the size of a photo for use in a newspaper, a 5X7" photo, either horizontal or vertical, seems to work best. The print with the subjects running horizontally will generally be all right for a three-column newspaper photo. The print with the subjects running vertically will generally produce a two-column newspaper photo.

You Need Action

Have the people in your picture doing something besides looking at the camera. And don't try to crowd an entire club membership into one picture. Limit the number of people to four or five, fewer if possible.

When you have an animal or an agricultural product, get a person in the photo, too, preferably the producer or owner.

An outstanding orchard or field of cotton is worthy of photographing, but make sure you get the producer in the picture looking at the result of his efforts.

It is better if the producer is looking at only one, two or three plants, rather than to place him in the middle of a large field and have his identity lost in the distance.

Watch the background in your picture. It shouldn't be so busy as to distract from what you are trying to show.

Cutlines

Providing a cutline, caption or legend for every photo you offer a newspaper is also your job. Cutlines, captions and legends may all refer to the same thing -- the explanatory material beneath the photo as it appears in the newspaper. Further reference here will be to a cutline.

The style used for cutlines varies among newspapers. Some papers allow relatively long cutlines while others use only one or two sentences. You should be guided by the style of your own newspaper. Most newspapers want people in photos identified, always from the left.

Don't fasten your typed, double-spaced cutline to your photo with a paper clip. The clip can damage the photo. Leave the cutline and photo detached, or attach the cutline to the back of the picture with a piece of Scotch tape.

If you leave your photo and cutline detached, buy a light blue pencil and write the first two or three words of your cutline lightly on the back of the photo. Don't use a black pencil.

Mailing

If you must mail photos, place protective cardboard on either side.

Know Your Camera

Books and books have been written about how to take good photographs. Your best bet is to obtain a good camera and use it often enough to learn how it functions. Then, when you need to take a good photo, you can concentrate on what your camera is going to record, not worrying about the mechanics of operating it.

The secret is practice. This will pay off for you whether you are taking photos for a newspaper, a display or colored slides.

NEWSPAPER TERMS

Here are some newspaper terms which you may come in contact with in your dealings with reporters and editors.

Ad -- Abbreviation for advertisement.

Advance -- A preliminary story concerning a future event; also a story written in past tense about an impending event and held for use in the future when the event takes place.

AP -- The Associated Press wire service.

Art -- All newspaper illustrations, including photos.

Back shop -- The mechanical department of a newspaper.

Banner -- A large headline of one or more lines placed on the story judged the most important in the issue.

Beat -- A reporter's regular run, as police beat, city hall, courthouse, etc.

B.F. -- Abbreviation for boldface (blacker) type. Also used as Bf, bf and BF.

Blow up -- To enlarge any printed or engraved matter.

Body type -- The size and family of type in which most of the stories in the paper are set.

Boil -- Reduce the length of the story.

Box -- An enclosure or border used around a headline or story to give it prominence.

Bulldog -- The earliest edition of a paper.

Bulletin -- A short, important or last-minute news item.

By-line -- The reporter or contributing writer's name carried at the top of a story.

C. and l.c. -- Abbreviation for "caps and lower case," calling for the use of capital and lower-case letters in type-setting.

Camera-ready copy -- Stories set in column-width lines ready to be pasted onto a page layout to be photographed for offset newspaper printing.

Canned copy -- Articles and photos prepared outside the newspaper office by personnel other than those employed by the paper.

Caps -- Capital letters.

Caption -- The headline appearing over a piece of art. (Distinguish from "cutline.")

Center -- To set a line of type so as to leave an equal amount of space on both sides.

Chase -- A metal frame into which type, art, advertisements, etc., are fitted to make a newspaper page for letterpress printing.

Cheesecake -- Leg art.

City editor -- The editor in charge of collecting and writing (and often editing) city news. (The duties of variously named editors vary widely from one newspaper to the next.)

Classified advertising -- Small ads printed in a special section of the newspaper and listed under classification headings.

Clean copy -- Copy requiring few corrections.

Column inch -- The standard unit of space used by many newspapers in measuring page space. The space is one column wide and one inch deep.

Copy -- All written material.

Correspondent -- A reporter who submits out-of-town stories to the newspaper.

Credit line -- A line acknowledging the source of a story or photo. (Examples: "By the Associated Press," "NMSU Photo.")

Crop -- To cut away portions of a picture to give it the desired size, emphasis and/or composition.

Crusade -- A campaign by a newspaper to bring pressure to accomplish a specific reform.

Cut -- Any newspaper photograph, illustration or diagram. Also, to reduce the length of a story.

Cutlines -- Explanatory matter appearing below a cut. The "caption" is the headline appearing over the cut. (Note: In some newspapers this is exactly reversed.)

Dateline -- The line giving the point of origin and (not always) date of a story of other than local origin and usually including the wire service which transmitted it. "Las Cruces, N.M. Oct. 21-(AP) --."

Deadline -- The last moment at which copy may be accepted for a particular edition of a newspaper.

Depth -- The distance from top to bottom as you look at a newspaper page.

Display ad -- Advertising matter other than classified.

Dot pattern -- A series of small dots placed in half-tone photos for reproduction in letterpress and offset printing processes.

Dummy -- A diagram or layout of a newspaper or magazine page showing the position of each story, headline and photograph. The dummy is usually much smaller than the newspaper page.

Ear -- A little box appearing on either side of the page one nameplate generally carrying information such as the weather report, an antecdote, etc.

Edition -- Each separate run of a newspaper. A newspaper may have several editions, such as the state edition, early mail edition, bulldog edition, three star edition, final edition, etc.

Editorialize -- To express opinion in a news story or headline.

Engrave -- Reproduction of half-tone photos onto metal or plastic plates for use in letterpress printing.

Exclusive -- An exclusive story. A "scoop" or "beat."

Face -- A type face refers to its characteristic design.

Family -- All the type of any one design, including all the styles, widths, and sizes.

Filler -- Short items of "time copy" which can be used at any time to fill small "holes" in pages.

Flag -- A term applied to the "nameplate" appearing at the top of page one.

Flat-bed press -- Any press that prints from type held horizontally on a flat surface.

Fold -- The point at which a paper is folded horizontally.

Font -- A complete assortment of type of a given design, style and size.

Format -- The size, shape and style of a page, section or book.

Fourth estate -- Traditional term for "the press."

Front office -- The business office. Sometimes, especially on small newspapers, used to distinguish all white-collar departments from all mechanical departments.

FYI -- "For your information."

Galley -- A shallow metal tray with three sides in which type is placed after being set. Also a rough measurement of length (a galley of type is about 20 inches).

Garble -- Errors in a line of type which prevent or curtail readability.

Glossy - Short for a "glossy print," a shiny-finished photograph favored by photo-engravers.

Gray out -- A page "grays out" in a particular area when that area consists largely or entirely of body type, producing a gray and uninteresting appearance.

Half-tone -- A photo reproduced with small dots to produce a printed effect of light and dark tones.

Handout -- A press release supplied by a publicity agent.

Head -- Headline.

Head schedule -- A record of all the headlines used in a particular newspaper and usually specifying the unit count for each.

Human interest story -- A pleasant little news oddity, usually brief.

HTK or HTC -- Means "head to come." It is marked on copy to indicate that the headline will be written and sent to the composing room later.

Insert -- Later information inserted into the body of a story after the original story has been sent to the composing room.

Intertype -- A trade name for typesetting machine similar to the Linotype.

Inverted pyramid -- The standard straight news story form, arranging the facts in descending order of importance.

Issue -- One day's newspaper. It may consist of several "editions."

Italics -- Italic type. The letters and characters slant to the right.

Itals, Ital. -- Abbreviation for italics.

Journeyman -- Professional.

Jump -- The continuation of a story from one page to another. Such a story is called a "jump story." The portion on the first page ends with a "jump line" (as "Continued on Page 4" or "See FIGHT, Page 4") and the portion of the story carried inside begins with a "jump head" and a "jump line" (as, "Continued from Page 1").

Justify -- To set a line of type the right length to fit a column's width.

Kill -- To eliminate all or part of a story, whether in copy or type form.

Layout -- A combination of stories, pictures, diagrams, etc., about a single subject. Also used synonymously with "dummy."

Legal advertising -- Official publication of notices, etc.

Lead (pronounced leed) -- The first paragraph or paragraphs of a news story. Also, a tip which may lead to a story.

Letterpress printing -- Printing process where ink is applied to paper by means of a raised surface. The original printing process.

Linage -- The amount of advertising printed in a specific period.

Linotype -- Trade name for a typesetting machine which sets a line of type at a time. The Linotype is the basis for the so-called "hot metal" printing process. It pours hot lead into a group of alphabetical letter molds, and as the metal cools a line of type is formed.

Localize -- To pick out a local angle in a story and "play it up."

Lower case -- Small letters, so called because early type cases had small letters in the lower, nearer section of the case.

Make up -- To arrange pictures and news matter in a page to obtain maximum effectiveness.

Masthead -- Statement of name of paper, its ownership, place of publication, subscription rates, etc., usually appearing on the editorial page.

Matrix or "mat" -- Generally, a die or mold from which something is cast. There are two types: (1) the papier-mache impression of an entire page (from which stereotype plates which fit on a letterpress printing press are cast) or a single photo or ad, and (2) the little brass mold used in typesetting machines from which a single letter is cast.

Mat roller -- The machine which makes mats from page forms preliminary to casting page plates for letterpress printing presses.

Morgue -- The newspaper's repository for clippings, cuts, mats, photographs, and all kinds of reference material.

Name plate -- The newspaper's name in large type at the top of the front page.

Obituary or "obit" -- A biography of a dead person.

Offset -- A term for photolithographic printing. An ink-water separation process which includes the "offsetting" of the newspaper page image from an etched plate onto a rubber roller and then onto the news print.

Pad -- To make a story or headline longer by using more words than are necessary.

Page proof -- The proof of an entire page, usually pulled to avert such errors as unmatched stories and heads or cuts and captions, gross headline errors, and errors of makeup.

Paste-up -- The process of placing "in-type" stories and ads on a page-sized paste-up sheet to be photographed for offset newspaper printing.

Plate etching -- The etching of images on thin, page-sized aluminum sheets which are the page plates for offset presses.

Pi -- Disarranged type hopelessly jumbled and unreadable.

Pica -- Twelve-point type, a point being about one seventy-second of an inch.

Pica pole -- A ruler, usually made of steel, used by printers and journalists.

Pix -- Short for pictures.

Plate -- A mold of lead, cast of newspaper page and ready for mounting on a letterpress-type press; also an aluminum sheet etched with the impressions of a newspaper page by passage of light through a photographic negative and chemical treatment, for use on offset presses.

Play -- The position and typographical treatment (emphasis) given a story.

Police blotter -- The record of the day's events by police.

Press agent -- A person hired by an institution, business establishment or individual to obtain favorable publicity in the news.

Proofreader -- Newspaper employee who reads proof for typographical errors and to see that it conforms to copy.

Public relations -- The science and art of attitude control. A public relations man seeks to create public favor for his employer by advising on policies affecting public attitudes; hence a broader field than press agentry.

Put to bed -- An edition has been "put to bed" when all pages have been closed and the edition is ready for the press.

Release date -- Date and sometimes hour for release of a story which has been prepared in advance of a happening.

Reefer -- Short one-line headline above main headline on a story. About half the size of the main headline and flush left.

Rewrite -- To write a story again to improve it. Also to revise a story already carried in another newspaper. Also to write a story from facts given by another reporter.

Roman type -- An upright face of type, thus distinguished from italics.

Run in -- Direction written on copy meaning to incorporate two or more paragraphs into one or to convert tabular matter into paragraph form.

Sacred cow -- A subject or personality always receiving favorable news treatment in a given newspaper.

Scoop -- An exclusive story.

Screening -- Placing a dot pattern in half-tone photos for use in offset or letterpress printing.

Shooting the page -- Photographing the pasted-up newspaper page to obtain a page-sized negative used to etch a plate for offset printing.

Sidebar story -- A story related to another more important story and usually run beside the main story or beside its carryover on the jump page.

Slant -- To emphasize a certain aspect of a story. A slanted story lacks objectivity because of the way the facts have been manipulated.

Slug -- To "slug" a story means to give it an identifying mark, which may be either the briefest possible statement of the nature of the story, as "Fight," or in some cases the first line or first few words of the headline.

Soc or sox -- Society.

Spread -- To "spread" a story means to give it prominent display, usually of several related items such as "sidebars" and art. Also any big layout, especially an elaborate picturial layout.

Squib -- A short item.

Standing heads -- Headlines which are kept in type and used again and again, such as column heads.

State editor -- Editor who supervises staff men or correspondents covering the surrounding area. He may supervise an independent state copy desk.

Stereotype -- The process of converting the flat newspaper page into a semi-cylindrical metal plate to fit a rotary letterpress-type press by making a mat of the page and then pouring lead against the mat to form a cast.

Stet -- Direction to "let it stand," used on copy or proof to indicate that a correction is in error and the copy should run as originally written or set.

Straight matter -- News story copy.

Straight news -- A straight-forward recital of news facts without coloring, embellishment or interpretation.

Stripping in -- Inserting and fastening half-tone photo negatives into a larger offset page negative prior to etching page plates.

Style sheet -- A compilation of typographical and other rules applying to a particular publication.

Subhead -- A short head, usually of one line, usually set in the same type as the body of the story, but usually boldface. It serves to break up the monotony of a solid column of small type. It is almost always written about the part of the story directly below it.

Tabloid -- A newspaper of small page size.

Teletype -- The automatic printer machine used to receive wire service copy.

Think piece -- A background or opinion article.

-30- -- often written at the end of a story.

Tr -- Proofreader's abbreviation for "transpose."

Turtle -- A metal cart used to transfer a page form from one place to another in the "back shop."

Typo -- Slang for a typographical error.

Underlines -- Sometimes used synonymously with "cutlines."

UPI -- United Press International wire service.

Upper case -- Capital letters.

Up Style -- A newspaper's style which calls for many capital letters.

wf -- Abbreviation used by proofreaders to indicate a wrong font of type.

White space -- Blank space in ads, heads, news columns, etc. to obtain more attention and make the page more pleasing to look at.

Wrap -- To continue a story from one column to the next on the same page, always to the right.

Wrap up -- An edition is "wrapped up" when all copy has gone from the copy desk to the composing room. A story is wrapped up when all the facts are in.

Wrong font -- Type of one size or style appearing erroneously in the same word with type of another size or style.

NEWSPAPER STYLE MANUAL

The following sections are furnished as a guide for capitalization, abbreviations, punctuation and numbers. Your newspaper will have a style of its own. You should become familiar with that style and use it when it differs from the suggestions offered here.

Much of the information in the following sections is taken from the stylebook of a major news wire service and from the AAACE (American Association of Agricultural College Editors) Communications Handbook.

CAPITALIZATION

1.c -- CAPITALIZE titles preceding a name: Secretary of Agriculture Clifford M. Hardin. LOWER CASE title standing alone or following a name: Clifford M. Hardin, secretary of agriculture. EXCEPTION: Incumbent president of the United States is always capitalized: ...Nixon, President...

2.c -- CAPITALIZE government officials when used with name as title: County Commissioner Bowman, Governor King. LOWER CASE when standing alone or following a name: Bowman, county commissioner.

3.c -- Long titles should follow a name: Toribio Apodaca, program leader, 4-H and youth development, New Mexico State University.

4.c -- LOWER CASE occupational or "false" titles such as committee chairman Emroy Shannon, lettuce farmer Leigh Fletcher.

5.c -- CAPITALIZE U.S. Congress, Senate, House, Cabinet; New Mexico Legislature, Santa Fe City Council. LOWER CASE when standing alone: The legislature passed 300 bills.

The building is the Capitol, the city is capital.

6.c -- CAPITALIZE committee in full names: Extension Agents Entertainment Committee, etc. LOWER CASE "committee" standing alone.

7.c -- CAPITALIZE full titles: New Mexico County Agents Association, Clovis Chamber of Commerce. LOWER CASE association, chamber of commerce, when standing alone.

8.c -- CAPITALIZE holidays, historic events, ecclesiastical feasts, fast days, special events, etc.: Fathers Day, Fourth of July, Battle of the Bulge, Good Friday, Passover, Christmas, Halloween, National 4-H Week, New Year's Day (Eve).

9.c -- CAPITALIZE specific regions: Southwest, Middle West, Midwest, Northern New Mexico, etc. LOWER CASE direction: Snow fell in the northern part of New Mexico.

10.c -- CAPITALIZE common nouns as part of formal name: Conchas Dam, Pecos River, Rio Grande, Dona Ana County Courthouse. LOWER CASE dam, river,

courthouse, etc. standing alone. CAPITALIZE Agriculture Building, Blue Room, Hermosa Drive, Bloomdale Street, etc.

11.c -- CAPITALIZE species of livestock, animals, fowl, etc., but LOWER CASE noun: Airedale, terrier; Palomino, horse; Hereford, whiteface, etc.

12.c -- CAPITALIZE names of flowers: Peace rose, etc. If Latin generic names are used CAPITALIZE the genus (camellia, Thea japonica).

13.c -- CAPITALIZE trade names and trade-mark names: Coca Cola, Di-Syston, etc.

14.c -- CAPITALIZE titles of books, plays, hymns, poems, songs, etc., and place in quotation marks: "Contours of Change." The words a, in, of, for, etc., are capitalized only at the start or end of a title.

15.c -- CAPITALIZE first word of a quotation making a complete sentence after a comma or colon: White said, "The sky is cloudy."

16.c -- CAPITALIZE names of organizations, expositions, etc.: Boy Scouts, Red Cross, World's Fair, New Mexico State Fair but LOWER CASE scout, fair, standing alone.

17.c -- CAPITALIZATION of names should follow the use of preference of the person.

18.c -- CAPITALIZE fanciful appellations: Land of Enchantment, Billy the Kid Country.

19.c -- CAPITALIZE decorations, awards, etc.: Certificate of Service, Outstanding County Agent, etc.

ABBREVIATIONS

1.a -- Do not use abbreviations the average reader will not understand.

2.a -- First mention of organizations, firms, agencies, groups, etc., should be spelled out. Exception: USDA. Thereafter in the story the abbreviation may be used. Designations of radio and television stations should appear without periods or spaces: Example KSWS-TV. Do not use periods or spaces between initials used in place of proper names: ASCS, TVA, NMSU, etc.

3.a -- ABBREVIATE business firms: incorporated, company, etc., when part of a business name: Stoes Brothers, Inc.; ABC Fence Co. But spell out when standing alone: incorporation, company.

4.a -- ABBREVIATE St., Ave., Blvd., Dr., in addresses but not when the street, avenue, etc. stands alone without the number preceding it. Examples: 113 S. 13th St.; 2200 Central Ave. NW (no periods in "NW"); Main Street, Central Avenue.

5.a -- Lower case abbreviations usually take periods. Examples: a.m., p.m., etc. Periods are not needed in 35mm(film).

6.a -- ABBREVIATE versus as vs. (with period).

7.a -- ABBREVIATE states which follow cities, towns, villages, airbases, etc.

8.a -- ABBREVIATE United States in titles: U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs.

9.a -- Spell United States when used as a noun. Names of foreign countries are always spelled out: Mexico, Canada, etc.

10.a -- ABBREVIATE and capitalize scholastic or honorary degrees, etc., but lower case when spelled: B.A., bachelor of arts.

11.a -- ABBREVIATE titles and capitalize: Mr., Mrs., M., Mlle., Dr., Prof., Sen., Rep., Asst., Lt. Gov., Gov., Gen., Supt., in titles before names but not after names. Do not abbreviate when the title stands alone without the name.

12.a -- Mr. is used only with Mrs., or in obituaries. Examples: Mr. and Mrs. John Jones were away from home. John Jones was away from home. Mr. Jones died away from home.

13.a -- Do not abbreviate Christmas.

14.a -- ABBREVIATE months when used with dates: Oct. 12, 1971; but spell out otherwise as October 1971. Abbreviations of months are Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec. Do not abbreviate March, April, May, June or July.

15.a -- Do not abbreviate days of the week.

16.a -- Do not abbreviate Alexander, Benjamin, Charles, Frederick, William, etc., unless person does so himself. Follow person's preference.

PUNCTUATION

Punctuation in writing serves the same purpose as voice inflection in speaking. Short, simple sentences lessen the need for punctuation.

The Period

1.p -- The period is used after a declarative or imperative sentence: The cat is gray. Shut the door.

The period is used after a question intended as a suggestion: Tell how it was done.

The period is used in summary form:

1. Vietnam War. 2. Foreign policy. A. Punctuate properly. B. Write simply.

2.p -- The period is used for ellipsis to indicate that a word or words have been omitted. Example: Now is the time for all...men to come to...their country.

3.p -- The period is used in abbreviations: U.S., U.N., c.o.d., a.m., p.m., etc.

4.p -- The period separates interger and decimal: 3.75 per cent; $8.44; 1.50 meters.

The Comma

5.p -- The comma separates words or figures: What the solution is, is a question. Aug. 1, 1971. 1,223,334. The comma serves in a series: The woman was short, slender, blonde, well-dressed and old.

x, y and z. 1, 2 and 3.

6.p -- Do not use comma before "of": Hankins of Espanola.

7.p -- Newspaper usage has, in most cases, eliminated the comma before "and" and "or" but this practice does not lessen the need for the comma in: Fish

abounded in the lake, and the shore was lined with deer.

8.p -- The comma is used to set off attribution: The work, he said, is exacting.

9.p -- The comma is used to separate in apposition or contrast: Old Timer, the favorite, won handily.

10.p -- The comma is omitted before Roman numerals, Jr., Sr.: Louis XVI, John Jones Jr.

The Semicolon

11.p -- The semicolon separates phrases containing commas to avoid confusion, and separates statements of contrast and statements too closely related:

The draperies, which were ornate, displeased me; the walls, light blue, were pleasing.

The party consisted of B. M. Jordan; R. J. Kelly, his secretary; Mrs. Jordan; Martha Brown, her nurse; and three servants. (Without the semicolons, that could be read as nine persons.)

The Apostrophe

12.p -- The apostrophe is used in contractions: I've, isn't; in omission of figures: '71, '70s, class of '71.

13.p -- The apostrophe indicates the possessive case of nouns, omission of figures, and contractions.

Usually the possessive of a singular noun not ending in "s" is formed by adding the apostrophe and "s"; the plural noun by adding the "s" and then the apostrophe: boys' wear, men's wear.

The apostrophe also is used in the possessive "es": Joneses' house.

The "s" is dropped and only the apostrophe used in "for conscience' sake" or in a sibilant double or triple "s" as "Moses' tablet."

14.p -- The apostrophe use should follow the official name of a group, institution, locality, etc.

The Colon

15.p -- The colon precedes the final clause summarizing prior matter; introduces listings, statements and texts; marks discontinuity, and takes the place of an implied "for instance":

The question came up: What does he want to do?

States and funds allotted were: New Mexico, $3,300; Arizona, $4,000; etc.

16.p -- The colon is used in clock time: 8:14 p.m.

The Exclamation Point

17.p -- The exclamation point is used to indicate surprise, appeal, incredulity or other strong emotion:

How wonderful! What! He yelled, "Come here!"

The Question Mark

18.p -- The question mark follows a direct question, marks a gap or uncertainty and in the latter use is enclosed in parentheses:

What happened to Jones?

It was April 13 (?) that I saw him.

The mark also is used in public proceedings, interviews, etc:

Q. Where were you? A. I don't recall.

Exception: Where, in interviews, the question or answer is of some length, it is preferable to paragraph each.

Parentheses

19.p -- Parentheses set off material, such as nicknames or identification; or a clarifying element of a sentence; or insertion of identifying material:

Harold (Mutt) George,...

It is not the custom (at least in the areas mentioned) to stand at attention.

"That proposal," he said, "and one by (President Richard M.) Nixon are being studied."

20.p -- Where location identification is needed but is not part of the official name: The Santa Fe (New Mexico) Opera, etc. It is not necessary to bracket: The Santa Fe, N.M., area population, etc.

21.p -- Parentheses are not used around political-geographical designation: Sen. Joseph M. Montoya, D-N.M., and Rep. Harold L. Runnels, D-N.M.

22.p -- Parentheses set off letters or figures in a series: The order of importance will be (a) general acceptance, (b) costs, and (c) opposition.

The water is (1) tepid, (2) muddy from silt, (3) unpalatable, and (4) unfit to drink.

23.p -- Where part of a sentence is parenthetical and the punctuation mark comes at the end of the sentence it goes outside:

He habitually uses two words incorrectly (practical and practicable).

Ordinarily the mark goes inside: (The foregoing was taken from an essay.)

Several paragraphs of parenthetical matter start with the opening mark on each paragraph and the final paragraph is ended with a closing parenthesis with the punctuation inside.

Quotation Marks

24.p -- Quotation marks enclose direct quotations; are used around phrases in ironical uses; around slang expressions; misnomers; titles of books, plays, poems, songs, lectures or speeches when the full title is used; radio and TV programs, etc.

25.p -- Use of quotation marks instead of parentheses around nicknames apart from the name: George, who weighed 280, was called "Mutt."

The comma and period are placed inside the quotation marks. Other punctuation is placed according to construction:

Why call it a "gentlemen's agreement"?

The sequence in multiple quotations:

"The question is 'Does his position violate the "gentlemen's 'post-haste' agreement" so eloquently described by my colleague as "tommyrot"?'"

The Dash

26.p -- The dash indicates a sudden change. Examples: He claimed -- no one denied it -- that he had priority. If that man should gain control -- God forbid! -- our troubles will have only begun.

27.p -- The dash is used after the dateline and before the first word of a story:

LAS CRUCES -- Dean Philip J. Leyendecker announced, etc.

The Hyphen

28.p -- The hyphen is one of the least correctly used, and most abused, marks. The best guide is your dictionary.

29.p -- The hyphen has been abandoned in newspaper usage in weekend, world-wide, nationwide and many other such word combinations.

30.p -- The following are some general rules regarding the hyphen:

When spelled out, compound numbers from 21 to 99 are hyphenated: twenty-five; one hundred and fifty-nine.

Some, but by far not all, compound words take a hyphen: able-bodied, bull's-eye, cave-in, great-grandfather, merry-go-round, mother-in-law.

Do not hyphenate vice president, high school, second cousin.

Other compound words are run together: darkroom (photography laboratory), headache, highway, newsstand, summertime, bridesmaid, stepmother, nevertheless.

Many hyphenated compound words are made up of a prefix, or introductory qualifier, and the word it precedes:

All-, ex-(former), quasi-, self-, and sometimes co-; all-knowing, ex-champion, quasi-judicial, self-contained, co-author.

All prefixes need a hyphen before words beginning with a capital letter: all-American, pro-American.

31.p -- A hyphen often prevents the meeting of two identical vowels: re-election, semi-independent.

32.p -- Use a hyphen to distinguish an unfamiliar use of a prefix from a familiar use: recover -- re-cover (as in covering furniture), recreation -- re-creation.

33.p -- Several words may combine as a modifier preceding a noun. They need to be joined by hyphens: a question-and-answer period, a step-by-step account, a devil-may-care attitude. No hyphens are needed here: explain step by step, tend toward the middle of the road.

Ampersand

34.p -- Don't use it (&).

79

NUMERALS

1.n -- In general, spell out numbers below 10. Use numerals for 10 and above.

2.n -- In a series of related expressions, treat all numbers alike: He had 3 suits, 12 pairs of shoes, 65 shirts, and 102 ties. There were three horses, two cows, six pigs, and one dog.

3.n -- Use figures for exact amounts of money: $4,567,346. For round sums of millions or billions: $4 million, or $2 billion. Spell out cents for amounts less than $1: 29 cents.

4.n -- Spell out a figure when it begins a sentence: Fifty cows died in the fire.

Exception: 4-H should never be spelled out, even if it begins the sentence: 4-H members met at city hall.

5.n -- Use numerals for highway designations: U.S. 66, Interstate 10, N.M. 28.

6.n -- Some newspapers hyphenate fractions of numbers: 1-3, 1-2. Some newspapers spell them out: one-third, one-half. Spell out fractions when they stand alone: three-fourths of a mile.

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